THE

Semitic Nations.

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THE SEMITIC NATIONS.

In studying the histories of different nations and reflecting upon their mental products, their endeavors, aims and ideals, the question arises: Why has this or that nation acted so and so and not otherwise, why has it pursued such and such aims, why has it brought forth such and such mental products, while another nation acted altogether differently, strived after something altogether different, and produced something altogether different? Wherein lie the causes of these different and often opposite tendencies? Accident this cannot be, for there are no accidents. All that comes to pass, is a *necessary* result of a foregoing cause. Shortsightedness alone sees the reign of chance in small and, at times, even in great events. Let us, who occupy ourselves with historical studies, *i. e.* with the natural history of spiritual man, follow the example of natural historians, who inquire after the causes of every phenomenon, and hence arrive at the establishment of general laws, of which these phenomena are to be regarded as necessary results. Contemplating thus more closely upon the varied phenomena in the history of nations, we too, perhaps, may succeed in discovering some general laws pertaining to their varied characters, of which these historical phenomena are to be regarded as their necessary results.

Wherein then lie the causes and motives of those heterogeneous actions and endeavors of the nations?

Some say, in *Religion;* this, they say, has put a definite stamp upon the character of every nation, and guided its actions. But this is not true, for two reasons.

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For in the first place we find, that one and the same religion produced different effects in different nations, and in the second place we see, that one and the same religion assumed different forms in different nations. The beneficent and ennobling influence of Christianity, was by far the greater upon the so called barbaric northern nations, than upon the cultivated nations of the ancient world. Had not Christianity imparted a moral stamina to those northern nations, they would have been morally ruined and physically weakened as they advanced upon the corrupted cultured countries of the south. It is through Christianity, in preserving those nations morally and physically, that our modern culture was made possible. But the influence of Christianity upon the cultured nations of antiquity, was by far less beneficent, and although it has not destroyed that ancient culture, as some historians maintain, still has it certainly hastened the fall of it, because the main principles of Christianity are characteristically antagonistic to the specifically *heathen* culture of antiquity. The same can be said of Mohammedanism and Buddhism, for these religions too have exerted totally different influences upon different nations. Every religion, which springs up in a civilized, or even in a semi-civilized nation, is the product of a new form of civilization; represents always a new beneficent idea; but *how* a nation understands and practically utilizes that new idea and form of civilization, depends chiefly upon the character of the nation, which has accepted this new religion. It is not merely the seed sown that is of importance, but chiefly the *soil* in which it is put.

On the other hand we see also the same religion assuming among different nations a totally different form and character, so that at times it seems incredible, that one and the same idea should manifest itself in such different ways. I will not point out here the different forms merely of Christianity in the Orthodox (Greek,) Catholic, Protestant, Nestorian, Jacobite, and Abyssinian churches; we see that one and the same form even, assumed a different character among different nations. The oriental orthodox church among the Slavic nations, has a partially different character from what it has among the Greeks; the character of the Catholicism of Italy, differs very much from the Catholicism of Germany, and

this again differs from that of France, and this lastly differs from the Catholicism of the Spanish nation. So Mohammedanism also assumed a totally different form among the Persians from what it has done among the Arabs. We shall revert to this point again. On the other hand we notice also, that similar religious tendencies and institutions develop themselves among kindred nations, who profess different religions, which are based on different and even opposite principles. Of this we will adduce striking examples further on. Religion, therefore, though we admit its great influence unconditionally, does nevertheless not determine absolutely the character of a people, but, on the contrary is itself modified and transformed by the views and innate inclinations of the people professing that religion.

Laws and state institutions, say others, have exerted the greatest influence upon nations, and determined their characters. Nations, they say further, develop themselves differently in countries where we find liberal institutions, and differently in countries where the free movement and self-direction of the individual is hemmed in by restrictive regulations; and lastly they say, the development of a nation is different in autocratic, in constitutional and republican states. But at the basis of this assumption, there is a confounding of effects with their causes. It is just the very question: Why have such and such laws and state institutions developed themselves in one nation, and other and even opposite ones in another nation? Why has a mighty aristocracy formed itself in one nation, a democracy in another, a state autocracy in one, a tightly drawn centralization in another, restrictive laws in one, and perfect freedom of the individual in the other? We observe here too the same phenomenon, which we did in religion, viz., that the same laws and state institutions which are productive of the happiest effects in one nation, may conduce to the utter destruction of another nation. Do we not see that those very free institutions, which brought the Anglo-saxon race to the highest flourishing state, served the Spanish race only to its destruction, and resulted in confusion and anarchy? Thus we see that the autonomy, which in one nation promotes the prosperity of the individual and establishes a true freedom, only multiplies tyrrany and

arbitrary rule in another nation. Here too then, the important point is chiefly the soil, in which the seed was sown.

Another erroneous assumption was advanced more recently, and has found many adherents. It was maintained, that the climate, the constitution of soil, and the geographical situation of countries have conditioned and determined the lot and the actions of their nations. The chief promulgator of this view, is the well-known Englishman Buckle, whose doctrines were regarded in a measure as a new scientific revelation. This doctrine has apparently much in its favor, but is nevertheless, according to my conviction, fundamentally false. It is evident enough, that inhabitants of an inland country can not become navigators, but that those of a coast or island will become such, more or less; that inhabitants of a widely extended plain, where there are no minerals and no mines, will betake themselves to cattle raising and lead a nomadic life, while the inhabitants of mountain regions will adopt a more settled life; that finally the self-preserving instinct will drive the inhabitants of a cold and unfruitful land to activity, while the South sea islander, who can satisfy his wants with a few easily gotten fruits, will spend the best part of his life in idleness. But this is only appearance and deception, the result of confounding the mode how the character of a nation manifests itself, with the real character of the same; for climate, soil, and geographical situation of countries, are only conditions of the way in which the character of a nation *manifests* itself; nay, they even impart to the character its peculiar individual stamp, *but they do not create that character.*

Navigation does not form the character of the English people, but is only a mode, a manifestation of the enterprising spirit, which characterizes that people. If Englishmen lived in an inland country, they would manifest their enterprising spirit in a different way. Englishmen and North Americans are active and enterprising in South America and the South sea islands; but South Americans and South sea islanders would be as lazy in England and North America as they now are. What was said here, can be demonstrated by countless instances, where different nations inhabited successively the same

country and played quite different parts in the history of the world. Take Egypt as an example. This elongated narrow strip of land, closed in by deserts on the east and west, and traversed by a mighty stream, presents by its situation, its immense fertility, and its yearly recurring innundation, a decidedly expressed physiognomy which is peculiar to itself; and yet, what a heavenwide difference between the Pharaonic and the Mohammedan Egyptians! What a prosperity, what a power, what an enterprise, and what a high development of the arts in its days of yore, and what a misery, what a poverty, and what an insignificance in its later days! What have the ancient Egyptians not done in culture and art, and what have the Egyptians of the Caliphs, the Alides, the Mamelukes and the Turks done, invented or accomplished? The former have built the pyramids, those astounding structures, the objects of admiration for thousands of years; they created mighty works of art, channeling the whole land; invented the art of writing, studied astronomy, mathematics, and medicine; the later Egyptians plundered the pyramids and the magnificent graves of the ancient kings, destroyed the works of architecture and art, neglected the canalization of the land, and—studied the Koran and its commentaries!

A little further north of Egypt, there lived a small nation on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, who owned a small strip of land, not larger than about fifty by a half or one miles, and how great was that small nation? Its industry was the vastest one of antiquity, its ships plowed all the then known seas, and its colonies and mercantile stations extended from India to the Atlantic coast, and from southern Arabia to the Caucasian mountains. Its fleets often vied with those of Greece in its prime, and in the ranks of its armies were found Persians from the distant east, as well as men from Asia minor and Africa. We speak here of the Phœnicians, whose merchants the prophets call "Princes" and "the honorable of the land." But, yes, says some one, the Phœnicians had nothing to eat in their small land, and so were compelled to seek their subsistence by means of navigation. To this we answer: that neither have the Mohammedan inhabitants of that land, in later times, enjoyed any too great abundance of food, and yet they stayed at home,

and rather preferred to study their Mohammedan traditions concerning the relation of their prophet Mohammed to his numerous wives and female slaves, or busied themselves with questions of similar import.

Almost on the very spot where once Carthage was, stands now Tunis, but where are now the Tunensian Hannibals, Hasdrubals, and Hamilcars? Where are now the Tunensian fleets, which made the Mediterranean instinct with life? Lastly, where are now the Tunensian armies, who traversed the Alps, and brought mighty Rome frequently to the brink of destruction? All these exist no longer on the soil of ancient Carthage; but instead of these, there is a pitiable Bey, who does not pay his debts, and whose Hannibals and Suffets study diligently Beidhawis' commentary on the Koran, or learn by rote the Arabic grammar composed in verse by Ibn Malik.

One more example: The ancient Phœnicians settled early in Spain, founded there a mighty colony, whence their war-fleets, their armies, and colonies were sent out in all directions. Of their vast mining operations we have vestiges yet to this day. The old Basques in Spain, were brave, obstinate, and self-willed, as they are to this day, and although not altogether without culture, still have they not accomplished anything near that, which their neighbors the Phœnicians have. Later on, there lived in Spain the Goths and the Arabs together; yet how different was the degree of culture, the mental and religious tendencies of these two nations, while they have yet lived together, and even after the former expelled the latter from the land. Yes, it is Spain, which offers the most striking evidence of the futility of that theory, that climate and soil have a decided influence upon the inhabitants of a country. No land in Europe, says Buckle, is so like the tropics as Spain. But, says he, there prevails in that land a mode of regarding nature, which inflaming the fancy of men, promotes their superstition and frightens them away from investigating such threatening phenomena, in other words prevents them from the creation of science. No other part of Europe, he says farther, is so designed by nature to become the seat and refuge of superstition as Spain. In reference to this assertion, a man of genius and deep thought, Geiger,

asked some years ago already: "How does it happen, that that same Spain, which according to Buckle, must by a natural necessity fall very low, should in spite of its droughts and earthquakes and enfeebling heat, yet have flourished so highly under the Arabs? While science and arts were almost wholly banished in the Middle Ages from its neighboring kingdoms, they found their richest cultivators just in Spain; cheerful poetry and deeply penetrating keen research exalted the soul, force and grace ennobled industry, and everything that promoted the welfare of society found there the greatest care. Mohammedans and Jews distinguished themselves by loftiness and clearness of spirit, and even kindled many a spark in Christian Spaniards, etc. After the Moors were banished from Spain, then its former flourishing agriculture fell to decay, so that entire tracks of country, which were formerly in the most flourishing condition, became almost total deserts, and are even so in part to this day. With the expulsion of the Jews from Spain, there vanished industry, commerce, and enterprise, so that many cities became insignificant and uninhabited. Yes, this expulsion of the Jews, was in part the cause of the moral decay of the country; for the high rise of Spanish literature in the fifteenth century, originated for its greatest part from the Jews, who in consequence of the terrible persecutions at the end of the fourteenth century, went over in masses to Christianity, and, according to the Spanish literary historian Amados del Rios, brought Spanish literature to its highest state of prosperity. Nay more, after the departure of the Jews from Spain, there were entire districts without any physician, so that people were obliged to invite physicians from abroad and pay them high annual salaries. How then does it happen, that of two races, who lived under the very same climatic conditions, the one should distinguish itself in art, poetry, and science, and the other should equally distinguish itself in mental stupidity, narrow mindedness and laziness? The causes of this mental difference can evidently not lie in the climate, soil, and geographical situation of the country, but must be sought somewhere else.

Where then do the determinative causes lie, in consequence of which, one nation, under given conditions, becomes so and so cultivated, acts so and so under given

circumstances, while another nation, under equal conditions and circumstances becomes differently cultivated and acts differently? In order to answer this question, we will pursue the path of natural historians, who maintain, that the whole can not be understood before the individual parts are examined and thoroughly searched through. Let us, therefore, turn our look away from the nations, and direct it to the single individuals of them.

Not only individual nations, but individual men too, differ in their views, conceptions, moral inclinations and actions. This we have occasion to observe daily, and here too the question, why is it so, is perfectly justifiable. In times past it was believed by some, that man comes into the world a perfect *tabula rasa*, and that it were possible to make any thing you please of him by education. There is no need of bringing up evidences against the radical falseness of this view. We meet daily with individuals, who have enjoyed the best education, who have had the best of examples before them, yet who have turned out the most vicious reprobates, and on the other hand, the instances are frequent also, of persons, who have had no education, or a very bad one, and who had bad examples before them, and who have turned out to be excellent and virtuous individuals. Religion, climate, education, and social standing can certainly not explain these phenomena; for we observe those differences taking place among the different members of the *same* family, who live together. Religion, climate, etc., are, therefore, only the conditions of the *form*, by which the character of the individual *manifests itself outwardly*. The main thing is, the *inborn character of the individual*, which to a certain degree can, indeed, be mollified and modified but can not be either created or destroyed by any thing.

With the same character, with which the individual human being is born, with the same he descends into the grave. The kindly disposed does not become ill-disposed, the judicious does not become thoughtless, the firm does not become instable, the stingy does not become benevolent, etc. By education one may acquire knowledge, good or bad views and opinions and prejudices, which will of course have their influence upon his actions, but his native character and inclinations, these can not change essentially. Age and education may, indeed,

soften and modify also, to an extent, this or that trait of the character, but it itself they can not radically reconstruct. Social position may exert an influence upon the way how the character manifests itself externally, but by no means can it change that character itself; for when the man of the lower class practices his cheating in the second-hand shop, or when he of the middle class swindles on the exchange, or as a director of a bank, or when he of the upper class, as governor of a province, or head of a cabinet, falsifies public opinion, deceives his monarch by false representation, then all these three do one and the same thing essentially, only under different forms, which are conditioned by their different social positions. It is therefore, ridiculous to exhort the vacillating to be firm and persevering, the thoughtless to be thoughtful, or the coward to be courageous, as absurd as to exhort the fool to be wise. The character of a man, whatever it be, can as little change itself into its opposite, as the lion can change itself into a horse, yet, we hear it often said, that a man should be master of himself; this indeed he should be,—if he *can*. But the weak individual can as little do this, as a child can lift a heavy burden. It is said often, indeed, that this or that man was formerly a mean reprobate, but has changed now, reformed, and became a very excellent and noble man. But this is not true, this happens only in novels and plays, not in real life, for the mean and reprobate man never becomes noble or excellent. But this indeed may come to pass, that a man of a dependent character, may by associating with bad men, be led to wickedness, and then again by associating with good and moral men, be led back to virtue; so also another man, whose actions are the results of false and demoralizing doctrines and views, may be reformed by proper instruction.

We see, therefore, that the actions of men are determined chiefly by their native characters and inclinations, and that all other circumstances either have only a subordinate influence upon them, or operate only upon the manner how the human character shows itself externally. But a nation consists of single individuals, and who will deny, that every nation has a character peculiar to itself, more or less sharply pronounced. What is a nation but a great collective individuality. But every race too con-

sists of a variety of individual nations and no one will dispute, that there are characteristic traits which are peculiar to entire groups of nations and races. That one nation should have acted so and so, and altogether differently from what another one did, that the bent of mind of one nation should totally differ from that of another, these all proceed from the native character and inclinations of the individual nation. All depends upon the preponderance in that nation of the mind over the heart, or upon the equipoise of these; upon its intellectual endowment or the want of it, upon its thoughtfulness or its levity, upon its love of order or negligence, its perseverence and patience, or its vacillation and fickleness, upon its enterprise or its inertness, etc. These good or bad qualities of the nations, always determined their moral and material actions, and conditioned their several places in the history of the human race. All other circumstances had, indeed, their influence, but subordinately only, and determined, as above said, chiefly the mode of the phenomena. And when individual great men have accomplished great things, and have transformed their nations, they could do it, only because they had good material to work upon, because that material was capable of being formed at all. With a nation of Hottentots, neither Alfred nor Peter the Great could have achieved for their states a historic importance. The best of wheat can not thrive in a sandy soil.

The character of a nation is as immutable as is that of an individual; the main characteristic traits of the modern nations, were peculiar to their ancestors a thousand and even two thousand years ago. The following sketch of the character of a certain nation, which I will not yet name, is given by a spiritual historian: "In its individual communities there is a want of harmony, of firm government, of an earnest sense of citizenship, and of consequential endeavor; the only order which they brook is the *military*, whose disciplinary fetters dispense the individual from the heavy burden of self-restraint. Its prominent qualities are: *personal courage*, a free, impetuous mind, open to any impressions, much intelligence, but at the same time extreme mobility, want of perseverance, opposition to discipline and order, boastfulness and perpetual contention as consequences of inor-

dinate vanity. Two things this nation holds in great esteem, viz., fighting and esprit, (wit.) Every thing this nation can turn into the service of fame, even a wound, which is frequently enlarged after it is received, so that it could be boasted of with its greater scar. Of duelling too they are especially fond."

Who might this people be who are thus described?

Is it not the French nation? Yes, and also no!

The description is that of the Gauls of the time of Camillus and Julius Cæsar, and yet how admirably apt too of the modern Frenchmen! The ancient Gauls had to be sure, not yet had, that organized imperially patented democracy, no such well-appointed secret police, no mendacious official press as their posterity the modern French have had them until lately, through the grace of an adventurer, and which, though in a different form, they are bound soon to have again. But these Frenchmen would not have been blessed with those good things, were they not in many respects, even to this day, alike to their ancestors, the Gauls.

Let us look again at Spain. Does it not seem, that Ferdinand the Catholic and his successors, in their endeavors to exterminate every kind of heresy from Spain, only desired to continue the actions of the Gothic kings Reccared, Sisebut, Chintilla, Receswinth, etc. etc.? Does it not seem that those began just there where these ended, that they were their immediate successors? And yet there is a space of 800 years between them, years of most arduous and bitter conflicts with a foreign faith and a foreign people, who have conquered the whole country nearly, and who established there a new culture and a new civilization, which has had its influence upon the Spaniards too.

When we turn to the East, we find there a people, who in its sacred Scriptures was incessantly admonished 2500 years past not to lie; this people, who needed that admonition very much, has mingled itself since that time with Greeks, Arabs, Turks, and Mongolians, has also accepted other religions, and yet it is to this day the most mendacious of all the nations of the entire East. We speak here of the ancient and modern Persians. Did not Cambyses rage against the temples and gods of the ancient Egyptians, did not Xerxes destroy the temples and altars

of the Greeks, was not the war of Darius Hystaspes against his predecessor, the Magian Sautama, of a religious nature? And to this day, the Persians are far more fanatical than their co-religionists the Arabs.

If therefore the character of a nation in its main features remains constant for hundreds and even thousands of years, what is then more natural, than that the actions, the moral tendencies, and mental products of nations should be determined by their innate natural traits and inclinations? That which we perceive daily to be the case with single individuals, is true also of individual nations, and that which determines the lot of the individual human being, determines also that of entire groups of nations and races.

We thought necessary, to make these, perhaps too lengthy, introductory remarks, because the ideas herein maintained, to which I myself and others too have arrived through original studies and observations, are not yet generally acknowledged, and have but recently begun to make their way in the world. But since the character of the Semitic nations, as we conceive of it, is to be the means by which we would explain the material and moral actions of this group of nations, it was, therefore, necessary to point out at first, where the source and key for the explanation of those phenomena are to be sought.

A celebrated historian asserted, that the nations, who dwelled around the basin of the Mediterranean Sea, were to be regarded as the representatives of ancient history. And I would further say, that so far as that, which we usually call "General History," is concerned, its representatives are *three races mainly:* the Indo-European, or more briefly the Aryan, then the Semitic, and lastly the Ural-Altaic races. Of the last there is little to say; that race destroyed much and built up little; it lived upon other people's expenses, and produced nothing itself. Neither has it widened the moral horizon of the nations by any new ideas nor has it enriched the material welfare of mankind by any new inventions. Individual groups of this race, as the Turks and the Hungarians, have progressed as far as the formation of an elementary state, with a royal idol at its head, who was either the representative of a boundless despotism, or of a most disgusting stupidity and slothfulness. When they were in-

cited by any impulse, then they fell with the tempestuous rage of destroying locusts upon the nations of culture, exercised cunning and unheard of refined cruelties, and destroyed the spiritual and material works of many centuries. When their rage exhausted itself, then they were either absorbed by the nations whom they conquered, or they formed a certain kind of a habitation for themselves, where they suffered that cultivated other nations should bring to them the elements of culture and civilization, things which they sometimes appropriated. To themselves, humanity owes no thanks, they have done much harm, and very little what was useful; it may be, that like epidemics they cleared the atmosphere of some pestiferous materials. Other groups of this race, like the Finnic, have not even succeeded in the formation of any state, and remained perfectly passive in the history of the human race.

The real and main representatives of the Cultur races are the Aryans and Semites, both of whom are the makers of our history. There were, indeed, some centers of culture before these two races appeared in history, as e. g. Egypt and the land where the cuniform writing was invented; perhaps also Jewish Chaldea, centers of culture, which are designated by the uncertain name of Hamitic; but the influence of that culture upon our history is only a mediate one, while the actions of those two races are operating on us vitally to this day, and their activity has not come to a close yet.

The Aryan race embraces a great number of individual groups of Nations, disseminated from India over Persia, the Caucasus, through entire Europe to the western coast of Iceland, and now all over America. This race consists chiefly of the following national groups: the Indian, the Iranian, the Minor-Asiatic-Caucasian, the Grecian or Pelasgian, the Italian or Romanic, the Germanic, the Slavic and the Celtic. The degree of consanguinity between these groups varies, and equally so also does the historical importance of each one of them, so that one is apt to accord the rights of primogeniture to one or the other group exclusively, because it has acquired the entire moral wealth of its race for itself, and left its brethren to go out empty.

Every one of these groups are again divided into many

nationalities, every one of which had found a different lot and a different position in history. Nay, it even happened, that an individual tribe of a nation became specially prominent by dint of intellectual excellencies and talents, as e. g. the Ionian tribe among the Greeks, and the tribe of Latium among the Italics.

The Grecian people, by virtue of its pre-eminent spirit as well as energy of character, occupies the chief place in this race. We find the great talents of this people distributed among the Indian and Italic groups, the former distinguishing itself in mental qualities, the latter in energy of character. Other groups of the same race made their historic appearance subsequently, and building upon the culture of their predecessors, they became the representatives of a new civilization and remained as such. Other groups of this race have but lately woke up from their historic slumber, and are perhaps destined to become the founders of the civilization of the future.

The Semitic race presents no such variegated picture as that which the Aryan race does. It does not separate into so many national groups, and the relation of its nations to each other in point of language, is that which the nations of the individual Aryan groups bear to each other.

The geographical dissemination too of the Semitic race is by far less than that of the Aryan race; but for that the Semites formed themselves into compact masses in their habitations, which were little or not at all interrupted by foreign nations. This race divides into the following groups:

(1.) *The Southern, or Arabian Group.* This again subdivides into the *South-Arabian, or Himiaric Group,* (to which the Abyssinians too may be counted,) and into the *Middle or North Arabian Group.* (2.) The second of these groups is formed by the *Middle-Semitic* or *Canaanitic,* whose chief representatives are the Hebrews and Phœnicians, whose languages differed only dialectically. (3.) The third group is formed by the Northern or Aramaic, which occupied Syria, the north of Mesopotamia, and no doubt some of the eastern provinces of Asia Minor. (4.) The fourth group, which some include in the third, but as I think unjustly, I would denominate, the Eastern-Semitic or Assyro-Babylonian, which in some part, at least, was intermixed with an ancient non-Semitic nationality.

The talents too of this race, like those of the Aryan race, were unequally distributed, but there were no senior lords among them, who took possession of all, and left nothing for their juniors, for all of its groups played a greater or smaller part in human history, and none of them hibernated historically. An exception to this are the Abyssinians, among whom, however, an extensive admixture of Negro blood seems to have taken place.

As the Greeks distinguished themselves among the Aryans, so have the ancient Hebrews among the Semites, and that by great gifts of mind and heart, as well as by their idealism, so that the greatest part of humanity became instructed and enlightened and led on to a higher degree of perfection by their scriptures and doctrines. Next to the Hebrews, their neighbors the Phœnicians, distinguished themselves by great energy of character and enterprise. Every one of the other Semitic groups had their own peculiar excellencies, but the Arameans seem partly to have occupied the last place among them.

We can now approach our main task directly, and sketch the characteristic features of the Semitic nations. About fifteen years ago, a man of great talent and high philosophic and historic culture undertook the same thing, and in one of his chief works drew the picture of the Semitic nations; we mean here Renan and his characterization of the Semites, in the beginning of his still excellent book, in spite of some of its defects, entitled "Histoire generale et systeme compare des langues Semitiques."— This book written with French elegance, masterly clearness, and almost German thoroughness, found in Germany too a great circulation. His characterization of the Semites was almost universally acknowledged as the only true one, so that in looking into any book, which treated about the Semites, the words of Renan are met with in a rechewed condition *ad nauseum*. The only opponents, which Renan met with were those, who have made a specialty of the languages, literatures, and history of the Semites. This comparatively small company, but whose opinion in this matter is of the greatest importance, expressed themselves *ab initio* in opposition to Renan, a thing which the writer of these lines too did both orally and in writing. In consequence of this contradiction from competent judges, Renan wrote a little time af-

ter this: "Nouvelles consideration sur le caractere general des peuples Semitiques, et en particulier sur leur tendance au monotheisme," in which he modifies his views about the Semites on some points, and deals here more justly with them than he does in his above mentioned work. But this later composition of Renan, published as it was in a Specialist's journal, remained almost unknown to the public at large, while his former work was extensively circulated. But as no house can be built on a place where another is already standing, I must before giving my own sketch, express myself concerning Renan's characterization of the Semites, which on account of its general circulation and the illustrious name of its author must not be ignored.

We have already acknowledged our respect for Renan's great talents and versatility of knowledge, but in that one quality, which is indispensable for a historian, viz., *perfect religious impartiality*, he is at times deficient. He was educated in an ecclesiastical seminary, and it is told that hopes were entertained of his becoming a pillar of the Catholic Church. It is well known that he did not become that, but the very reverse, and it is, therefore, not easy for him to be perfectly unbiased in treating of religious questions; since, therefore, the Semites are the well known founders of the three positive religions, he approached the consideration of this race not altogether without prejudice. In consequence of this, perhaps unconscious, prejudice, Renan preformed his judgment concerning the Semites, and estimated certain phenomena of this race in accordance with false preconceptions. In passing judgment on an entire race, one can not give a true picture of it by giving prominence to certain characteristic features of one and another of its nations. Only such characteristic features must be found out in that case, which are common to *all* the representatives of that race. Renan did not do so, but collected those salient features of now one and then another Semitic nation, which fitted into his system; but those features of character which would not fit in there he tries to get rid of as best he can. Let us see now how he characterizes this race.

The Semitic race, he says, is a "race inferieure," which stands far below the Aryan. He ascribes moreover to the Semites an "absence de complexite des nuances," and

then "sentiment exclusif de l'unite." The Semites were incapable of grasping diversity and multiplicity, and have, he thinks, therefore, arrived instinctively at Monotheism. They also had neither mythology, philosophy, or any science. Polytheism and philosophy, he thinks, are the outflow of that ability of grasping the idea of multiplicity; in the childhood of humanity this ability produces polytheism, and in mature age philosophy.

Prophecy and revelation were Semitic products, while the doctrine of the Incarnation was perfected among the Aryans.

The Semites were wanting in imaginative power, they possess, therefore, no epics, no drama, and their poetry is, therefore, subjective.

Simplicity characterizes the Semites, the inability of forming something grand and whole: hence, he thinks, they never carried on any great commerce, were unable to organize any great states, and had no aristocracy, no feudal system, and no military organization. In a military respect the Semites were of little importance, and their military chief is often an ecclesiastical personage, as, *e. g.*, Abdelkader.

He denies the Semites any spirituality. Religious intolerance, supposed to be unknown to the Aryans, is said to be exclusively a product of the Semitic spirit, for which, of course, humanity owes them no thanks.

Laxity of morals and harsh egotism, Renan maintains, are also chief characteristic features of the Semite, for he is said to know of duty only to himself, and many a Biblical personage is adduced in evidence of this. This characteristic Renan concludes thus: "Ainsi la race Semitique se reconnait presque uniquement a des caracteres negatifs: elle n'a ni mythologie, ni epopee, ni science, ni philosophie, ni fiction, ni arts plastiques, ni vie civile, en tout absence de complexite des nuances, sentiment exclusif de l'unite."

In the later article which we mentioned, in seeking to reply to the objections which were raised against this characterization, Renan becomes measurably more just to the Semites, and says of them that they often become enthused for a mere idea, and that humanity owes them thanks for many a blessing. Notwithstanding this, he adheres to the above characterization, and it is inconceiv-

able how such an incapable, ill-formed, and egotistic race could still become enthused for a mere idea, and the bestowers of many a blessing upon humanity.

This characterization is in part decidedly untrue, for Renan imputes certain phenomena to the Semites which never took place among them, and in other parts again he interprets falsely these phenomena, deriving them from false causes, and thus ascribes certain qualities to the Semites which they do not possess. This characterization led on to consequences which reached far beyond Renan's aim; a school formed itself in France, which, conscious of an imagined superiority of the Aryan over the Semitic race, preached openly against Semitic monotheism, and almost encouraged a return to Aryan polytheism.

We will consider here some points of the characterization given by Renan.

The Semitic race were, according to him, a "race inferieure." It is difficult to dispute about such a point, as it often is purely subjective. That which the Frenchman considers as very foolish, the Englishman may consider very wise, and *vice versa*, in which each one of them may be perfectly correct from his standpoint. Can it really be that the ancient Babylonians were altogether void of any talents, they who invented weights and measures; they who, already in the eighth century before Christ, have made astronomical observations, which in great part are correct to a second; they who introduced a system of canalization throughout their whole country, by which they converted it into a paradise; they who have erected those vast structures which were the objects of the admiration of the ancient world? Or can the Assyrians be considered as having been untalented, who were so far advanced in architecture, and who produced works of art which can be placed by the side of those of the Greeks?

Many who have either lived among, or who had much intercourse with, the Arabs, maintain that these were very talented, and this, I believe, is attested by the magnificent beauty of Arabian intellectual culture during the Middle Ages, when they busied themselves with the greatest zeal in all departments of science. Only able and talented people have taste and pleasure in scientific pursuits.

That the Phœnicians, despite their grandeur, should after all have been without talent, this Renan may possibly believe. I for my part can not consider men like Hanno, Hamilkar, and Hannibal as having been blockheads. It is true that Renan attempts to strike out those Phœnicians from the list of Semitic nations, because they so obstinately refuse to be fitted into his system; but has he any tenable ground for doing so? Did they not speak a Semitic language? Were not their gods and their cities named by Semitic names? And what other criterion have we by which to determine the origin of any nation except its language? It is true that the few fragments of the Hebrew nation in the different lands of Europe speak in different languages; but the reason of this is obvious enough; when, however, *a great and widely-spread* nation speaks one and the same language from time immemorial, then that language must be taken as a decided criterion of the origin of that nation.

And the Hebrews, are they too a nation without talents? I believe that their worst enemies, from Haman down to the celebrated composer Wagner, accord to them high intellectual talents. Nay, more, these talents constitute the fortune and misfortune of this nation; fortune, because the intellectual talents are the highest blessings of life; misfortune, because they create envy and hatred; the blockhead is never envied, never hated.

Of the internal life of the ancient Arameans, we know indeed very little, and it is impossible, therefore, to say something positive of the degree of their talents. This much, however, is known, that the Syrians occupied themselves very extensively with grammatical studies, philosophy, and with science generally, that they translated and commentated extensively upon the works of Plato and Aristotle, and that for several centuries they were the only cultivators of science, and at last became the teachers of the Arabians.

Let us consider now the alleged inferiority of the Semites from another side. The Semites have founded Judaism, Christianity, and Islamism, and gave to humanity the Bible and the Koran. Hegel, the philosopher, says: All that exists is rational. I can not agree to this sentence, but would rather say: All that which does exist must exist, and since it does exist, it must have such

vital force in itself that its existence becomes a necessity, or else it would not exist. An idea, which has dominated for centuries, must have had a perfect right to such domination, and must have answered the spiritual demands and necessities of those over whom it dominated, for no idea can be made to attain a *lasting* dominion by means of ukases and police ordinances, he that believes the contrary knows but poorly humanity and history. Looking altogether away from theology, and placing ourselves on the standpoint which historians occupy, we say then: Since the Bible has been regarded as a holy book for thousands of years by millions, among whom were and are found thousands and thousands of highly educated people, who have for so long a time found in it refreshment, instruction, consolation, and elevation of soul, therefore must this Bible be a book which has answered, and which does answer, the spiritual wants of man; were it not so, then the Bible could not have occupied such a place in humanity. And speaking as we do here, not as theologians, we are able to judge of the Koran too in an unprejudiced way. This book also has become of great importance to humanity, and having the Old and New Testaments for its substructure, it undoubtedly disseminated some very great truths, and accomplished much good. Should then this race, which has enriched humanity with ideas so full of blessings, ideas to which even the most cultivated nations of antiquity could not rise, should then this race to which humanity owes so many blessings—as Renan himself admits—be a "race inferieure"? Impossible! But Renan sought in the Semites that which was of value for *him*, and finding little of that, he declares it to be a "race inferieure." But has the ingenious naturalist any right to pronounce the ingenious historian a narrow-minded man, because this one understands little of the naturalist's science? The Semites are actually as talented as the Aryans, only that the talents of the former are of a different nature from that of the latter.

Renan maintains further that the Semites have not the ability to grasp multiplicity, and incline, therefore, instinctively to unity. I confess I can not conceive how a Renan could have said any such thing. On the contrary, every uneducated mind sees in the multitude of phenom-

ena only an incoherent multiplicity; and it is only the more educated mind who seeks to reduce these to a fundamental unity. It requires, therefore, no special ability for grasping multiplicity; every child can do this; but it does require an especial ability to comprehend various objects as belonging into one category, and then reduce different categories again to one fundamental principle. In this very thing consists the task of modern natural science, viz., to reduce the multitude of phenomena to a single principle. Light, heat, electricity, and magnetism are for the layman four totally different things; but for the scientific man they are only four different phenomena of one and the same principle.

So far as the other points of Renan's characterization are concerned, it will appear further on, in our own characterization, what is true and what is false in them, and also in how far he falsely conceived of different phenomena in the institutions and mental products of the Semites, and explained them wrongly. But there is one point which I can not pass here unnoticed, viz., his assertion that *religious intolerance* is a thing unknown to the Aryans, and is an exclusive product of the Semitic mind. This is decidedly incorrect, for that intolerance occurs as much among the Aryans as among the Semites, and if it occurs more frequently among the latter, it is owing to the nature of the Semitic religion, and not to the character of its professors. A religion which negates every other one and declares it as a lie, can not be as tolerant as a religion which assumes a merely national character. The Greeks could not be intolerant to other than their own gods, for they did not ignore them, and only regarded them as foreign. On the other hand, they punished relentlessly every desecration of their own religion, on account of which they persecuted the philosophers Anaxagoras, Alcibiades, and others. The Greeks and Romans had a bitter hatred against the Jews, because they held them as traducers of their gods. It is well known how Antiochus Epiphanes persecuted the Jews during the time of the Maccabeans on account of their religion. The Aryan Brahmans persecuted the Buddhists fearfully, and for centuries, and in some Indian provinces succeeded in exterminating them completely. In the same way the ancient Persians, under Cambyses,

raged against the temples and gods of the Egyptians, and Xerxes against those of Greece. Of the religious fanaticism of the Aryan Sassanides, both Jews and Christians have enough to record. But the Jews did not concern themselves at all with the heathenism of other nations, and only prohibited idolatry in their own country, because of its connection with various vices in anterior Asia, by which the Jewish people might easily have been seduced. From proselytizing the Jews keep themselves far away even to this day. Islamism too is only intolerant against heathenism, because it regards it as a lie, but tolerates Christianity and Judaism because it does not consider them as false, believing of them only that they do not contain the full truth, and that they became antiquated through Islamism. Intolerance against the profanation of anything that is regarded as holy, is common to both Aryan and Semite; but the Aryans could not strive to promulgate the truths of their religions further on, because there were no truths in them which they could have regarded as specially their own. It must also not be left unnoticed that the Mohammedan Persian, although he is an Aryan, is incomparably more fanatical than the genuine Arab.

The peculiarities of a people arise from four fundamental causes, viz.:

1. From the nature of its intellect.
2. From the nature of its heart and nervous system.
3. From the relation in which these two qualities stand to each other, *i. e.* whether the intellect preponderates over the heart, or whether they balance each other.
4. And lastly the peculiarities of a nation depend upon the distribution of the spiritual gifts among its members, *i. e.*, whether they are limited to only a small number of individuals, or are bountifully divided among the great mass. From this stand point we will investigate the nature of the Semitic nations.

A. In reference to the *Intellect*: The Semite does not possess that fullness and variety of ideas, which the Aryan does, but he possesses a sound, practical, one might almost say mathematical intellect, a talent of easy and quick comprehension, and an acuteness, which often degenerates in subtleties. With such new ideas and conceptions as are the outflow of the intellect, the Semites

have little enriched humanity, but the ideas which they once grasped they worked up finely, and pursued to the utmost consequences.

B. In reference to the *Disposition*, (*Gemueth*) and the organization of the nervous system: The Semite possesses a deep, easily excitable disposition, and is capable of mighty feelings; he is therefore, lively, mobile, easily excited, passionate, quickly enthused for an idea, active and enterprising, flexible and adapting, easily finding himself at home in strange relations and circumstances, accommodating himself to them without difficulty, without, however, allowing of being absorbed by them.

C. In reference to the *interrelation of Heart and Intellect*: The easy excitibility and passionateness of the Semites is regulated by their intellect; there dominates in them a certain equipoise between heart and head, so that they guard each other against excesses. The Semite, therefore, moves apparently in contrasts, for while in the Aryan either the intellect or the heart predominates, we find in the Semite a sharply incising intellect, coupled with a deeply poetic disposition, reflexion coupled with enthusiasm.

D. In reference to the *distribution of Mental Gifts*: There were among the Semites always comparatively fewer great men of prominent mental gifts, so called geniuses, than among the Aryan nations; but the great mass of the former is more talented than that of the latter, so that we find fewer geniuses, but relatively more talented individuals among the Semites than among the Aryans. Dull and stupid individuals are fewer among the former than among the latter.

From these fundamental peculiarities of the Semites rise the following qualities:

1. *Soberness of Disposition and want of an extravagant fancy.*

2. *Sharply expressed individuality of the single person.*

3. Depth and inwardness of the Affections, (*Gemueth*) quick and easy excitibility of the same, and as a consequence of this, receptivity for humane ideas, inclination to benevolence, quick enthusiam for an idea, and *exaltation of the mind, of an idea, above material power*; a more spiritual conception of the external world and an inclination to *idealism.*

From these qualities may be explained the various phenomena in the life of the Semites, their fortunes, institutions and spiritual productions.

1. The *soberness* of the spirit of the Semites manifested its influence upon their religion, their science, their poetry.

1. Upon their *Religion.*

a. The Semites produced sober, simple, easily understood religious views and conceptions; speaking generally, we may say, that the Semites, as long as they did not come in close contact with other nations, showed far less inclination to coarse superstitions than the Aryans. We find in the Pentateuch already, prohibitions against all manner of sorcery and witchcraft, as well as against the belief in the influence of the stars upon the fortunes of nations. Even those rabbis, who were not exposed to Persian influences, forbade every kind of incantation, the use of secret, magic-like remedies and talismans, the belief in good and evil days, good and evil forebodings. So also is the Arab of the desert, as the general testimony of travelers assures us, little accessible to superstitions, and is a far less strict Mohammedan than the Persian and Turk.

b. The *Mythology* of the Semites, as far as we know it, viz., that of the Phœnicians, Babylonians, Assyrians and Arabs, is extremely sober and simple, and holds no comparison with the variety and richness of the mythology of the Greeks, whose mythology again compared with that of India, must appear simple and sober. The same is true of Semitic *cosmogony.* To be persuaded of this, it is only necessary to compare the cosmogony of the Babylonians, as we find it in Berosos and Eudemos, and that of the Phœnicians in Sanchonjathon, with that of Hesiod or with that of the Hindoos, as is seen in the laws of Manu and in the Mahabharata.

c. Religious revelry, religious extacies and religious trances occur, on the whole, far more rarely among the Semites than among the Aryans, and when they do occur, are not of such an excessive character as among the latter. Lucian speaks extensively of the Galls, the priests of the goddess Cybele in Asia Minor, and mentions that in their religious frenzy they mutilated themselves with swords; some of the New Platonians threw themselves

into religious extacies and believed then to have divine visions. The religious enthusiasms and trances of the Mohammedan Sufis and Derwishes, who are almost exclusively Persian Mohammedans, is well known. Such phenomena occur very rarely among the Semites generally, and particularly so among the Arabs, who are yet Mohammedans, and among the Jews.

There is very little inclination to *mysticism* found among the Semites. For a very long time the Jews kept themselves perfectly free from every kind of mysticism; so is also the Islamism of the Arabs almost free from it, while the Islamism of the Aryrian Persians has an entirely mystical character. The fanciful and mystical Sufism proceeded from the Persians, and to this day its spread is almost entirely confined to them. The genuine Arab, on the other hand, is too sober-minded to find any taste in it.

The life of Mohammed and Ali is indeed embellished by the Arabs with miracles, but keeps otherwise quite soberly, while the life of these heroes of Islam, as related by the Persians, assumes altogether the phantastical and mystical character of the life of Buddha, as given by the Aryan Buddhists.

2. The influence of Semitic soberness on *science.*

a. The philosophy of the Semites has a sober, one might almost say, a practical character; we call to mind only the Old Testament evidence of the existence of God. "Lift up your eyes," exclaims a great prophet, "to heaven and see who created all these!" Or as the Psalmist says: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the expanse preaches of the works of his hands." Very simple, but I as a Semite, find it also very rational. The Semites occupy themselves almost exclusively with only such philosophical questions, which to a certain extent have an immediate significance for life, and never philosophise aimlessly about things that are unsearchable.

Thus the philosophy of the Arabs, and a little later that of the Jews, turns chiefly about the two questions, which they called Tauchid and Tadil, *i. e.* the question, how the attributes of God are to be united with the idea of His absolute unity, and the question how to reconcile the doctrine of the divine omniscience, with that of human free will; these are questions which are of great prac-

tical importance for strict Monotheists and such as believe in those seemingly contradictory doctrines. The great problems of humanity, as *e. g.* "How to explain the creation of the material world by an immaterial God, and the relation of man to Him." These they explained in a very simple and rational way; but they never lapsed into Pantheism, nor into the doctrine of Emmanation. The assertion of Renan, that the Semites had no philosophy of their own at all, and that, that of the Arabs was only a "*philosophie Grecque ecrit en Arabe*," is decidedly incorrect; for who will maintain that the Semitic doctrines of creation, of the relation of man to God, as well as the general Semitic view of the universe, were not the products of philosophic reflection? It is only the *form* in which these philosophic doctrines are presented by the Semites, that differs from that of the more ancient and modern Aryans. So far as concerns the philosophy of the Arabs, I have many years ago called Mr. Renan's attention to the fact, that long before the Arabs ever knew of the philosophy of the Greeks, they already busied themselves with the philosophic solution of the above mentioned questions. Recently, Alfred von Kremer, who is highly versed in Islam and in Mohammedan literature, has shown that the Arabs have gone through all the phases of philosophy, from Scotus Erigena down to Kant and Schelling, and after enumerating all the views of the Christian European philosophers about God, he asks very pertinately: "Are all these deductions clearer than those of the Islamic thinkers? Do they enrich the circle of human conceptions with one positive idea? etc." Their Ethics crystalized themselves, so to say, in simple and practical sayings, and thus the Semites arrived at more sound results than the Greeks with their highly developed Diaclectics.

b. Instead of dealing with too abstract and insolvable questions, the Arabs occupied themselves principally with practical sciences, such as Astronomy, Mathematics. Medicine, &c., in which they were the first elementary teachers of the Aryans, and then became their most diligent and talented pupils. But when Renan asserts, that the Semites had no science at all, this can not but astonish all those that have a knowledge of Semitic literature, who well know that the writings, which treat of

Astronomy. Mathematics, Medicine, Chemistry, Geography, Botany, Zoology &c., in the Arabian, Hebrew, and partly in Syrian literatures, are numbered by the thousands. Renan explains subsequently his assertion by saying, he meant only that the Semites did not pursue an independent part in those sciences, and did not carry them further on. But this too is not correct; for the measuring of time and space is an invention of the Babylonians. These, as we mentioned above, have made very careful astronomical observations, long before the time there was yet any thought of science in Greece. There was a scientific literature in Babylon already in the beginning of the sixth century before Christ. King Solomon wrote: "Of the trees, from the cedars of Lebanon down to the Hyssop, which grows upon the wall, and of beasts and birds, and of creeping things and fishes." Is here not the contents of an entire Botany and Zoology? The Carthagenian, Mago, wrote already in the sixth century B. C., a great work on agriculture, which the Romans thought of such importance, that by order of the Senate it was translated into Greek by Dionysius of Utica, and from the Greek it was then translated into Latin. The Grecian agronoms, Manaseas and Paxamus, made use of this work of Mago. Columella calls him "*pater rusticationis*," and speaks in the highest terms of his work. So far as concerns the scientific activity of the Semites in the middle ages, we know that certain departments of science, *e. g.* Mathematics and Astronomy were certainly further developed by them, while it is impossible as yet to pronounce a definite opinion as to the value of their labors in other scientific departments, the labors of the Jews and Arabs in this province not having yet been sufficiently examined, because Orientalists know too little of science, and scientists, know too little of oriental languages.

3. The *Art* of the Semites is equal to their Philosophy and Grammar; it is sober, not rich in ideas, but distinguishes itself by its admirable detail, which is carried to the highest degree of finesse. As an instance I mention here the *Alhambra*. Seeing for the first time the sculptures of this palace of the Chalifs of Cordova, I was reminded by them of the definitions of the Arabian Grammarians and Logicians, and of some Talmudical discussions, which are equally fine but poor in ideas. The

so called Gothic style is, at least in part, of Arabian origin, and comparing this style of architecture, as far as it is of Arabian origin, with that of the Greeks, we are compelled to deny any grandeur of thought in the former, while its elaboration of detail is and remains worthy of admiration.

4. Influence of Semitic soberness on its *Poetry*. It is mainly lyrical: it is a momentary, mighty outpouring of a very feeling, passionate and easily excitable disposition. Such are the poetical products of the ancient Hebrews, as well as those of the middle ages, and such are those of the Arabs, and almost of the same character is even the poetry of Heinrich Heine. Real epic poems the Semites have none. An approach to an epic mode of presentation may indeed be found in the so called *Katub el-futuch* of the Arabs, *i. e.* in the writings containing romantic stories of the great campaigns of the Arabians after Mohammed, and of the heroes, which became prominent in them; but how soberly kept are even these romantic stories compared with the often measureless fancy, with which the Aryan epics are elaborated, as *e. g.* the Mahabharata, the Ramayana, the biographies of Buddha, and the Bodhisattwas. It must not be left unnoticed, that the first novelist, who gave a sober direction to German novel literature was a Jew; we mean Berthold Auerbach with his village stories. Whether Jewish music also, I mean that of Meyerbeer, Mendelsohn-Bartholdy, Halevy and other Jewish composers, has a specifically Semitic character, *i. e.* want of grand ideas and yet wonderful elaboration of detail, this I dare not assert, not being a musician myself; but *a priori*, I am almost inclined to maintain it, since the persistency of the Semitic character seldom denies itself.

II. A second trait of the Semitic character is a sharply expresed *Individuality* of the single person, which does not allow of its being easily absorbed by other individualities and be brought into obedience, but which rather offers a tenacious quality of resistance. This peculiarity of the Semites has given a special impress to their politico-social, scientific and religious relations.

1. In politico-religions relation.

a. There prevailed always among the Semites, a great respect for individuality, and in consequence of this, also

a great personal freedom and perfect equality, especially before the law; the Mosaic politico-social institutions, as well as the life and the laws of the Arabs give sufficient proof of this.

b. For the same reason there never was among the Semites any preferred, privileged *birth-aristocracy*, no *feudal system*, but there was among them an aristocracy of mind, founded upon individual personal worth. There were, indeed, noble families and noble tribes among the Arabs, but it is more correct to say, there were families and tribes who considered themselves nobler than the rest; but prerogatives and privileges were accorded to none. Even the Sherifs, *i. e.* the real or supposed descendants of Mohammed, enjoy in reality no special prerogatives, and it is only the very high significance of their ancestors, which procures for them a certain amount of respect. That among nearly all the Aryans, things were different in this respect, and are so in great part to this day, is universally known.

c. For the same reason too, there were no *Castes* among the Semites, no caste-priesthood, and wherever such were introduced, it was effected under great opposition from the part of the people, and after great conflicts, and the institution of caste-priesthood was at last abolished, as soon as circumstances permitted it. Among the heathen Arabs, the priest was called Kahin, *i. e.* "the sooth sayer;" whoever, therefore, knew the art of soothsaying could be priest. According to the Arabic institutions of Islamism, any one, who is versed in its religious laws, can perform the priestly functions.

It is well known, that Moses introduced an hereditary priesthood in Israel; but already in his lifetime there arose a powerful opposition against this institution. Many notable persons, of whom it is said, that they were "heads of congregations, who were called to the Assembly, men of name———," at the head of whom stood a very near relative of Moses, viz., Korah, these rose up against Moses and Aaron, and told them in genuine Semitic style: "You have enough! The entire congregation,— all are holy, and God is in their midst, and why do ye exalt yourselves over the people of God?" Down to the time of David the priestly family could not well hold its own, and until that time, we find that persons not of the

priestly families, frequently offered sacrifices by themselves, and this is mentioned without rebuke. It was not until the Monarchy combined itself, as it often happened, with the priesthood, and that not till after some vacillations, that the priesthood was able to maintain its rights. But the Hebrew priests were not merely sacrificers, they were also the teachers of the people, and thus distinguished themselves by personal worth and not by the mere privilege of caste. In the kingdom of the ten tribes, hereditary priesthood was abolished quickly and forever, and even in Judea a king made once an opposition, though an ineffectual one, against the hereditary priesthood; and the prophets too were a continual balance against it. The democratically disposed Pharisaic party during the second Temple, supplanted gradually the priests in their functions as teachers and attempted even to rob them of their religious priviliges, by assuming themselves certain religious duties. After the destruction of the second Temple, the priests lost any and every importance, and to this day, any one is chosen as a Rabbi who is distinguished for learning and piety. On the other hand, the inclination of the Aryans to castes, need not at all, I think, to be proven; it manifests itself to this day in the formation of guilds and special societies. It is well known, that the Brahmins of the Aryan Hindoos form a caste; but the Magii too formed a special tribe among the Persians.

d. In consequence too of that characteristic trait of the Semites, there was a prevalence among them of democratic state institutions and autonomy. The Mosaic state institutions were based altogether on the principle of entire equality and perfect autonomy; the entire people, not less than every village were to govern themselves, and this was partly done even during the time of the Kings. The Arabian king, sheich, or chief of the tribe, was only a *primus inter pares*, an official of limited power, the presiding officer of the assembly; his office was elective and not hereditary. Even the Chalifate itself was originally based on democratic principles. Originally all the property and revenue of the state belonged to all Moslems and was distributed among them as a yearly dotation, called "Atha;" the Chalif was the free chosen official, whose business was to oversee the state

property and distribute it equally, but like every other state governor, he had also to perform the ecclesiastical functions. One of his main tasks was, the dissemination and strengthening of Islamism. There was once an attempt made to refuse obedience to the Chalif Omar, because it was believed that he appropriated to himself from the booty a larger piece of cloth, than that which he gave to the rest.

The main cause of the downfall of the Chalif Othman was, his arbitrary procedure in the distribution of the state lands. This state of things lasted as long as the seat of the Chalifate was yet in Mecca. When this was transferred to Damascus, and the Omayades came to the throne, these allowed themselves to make some encroachments, to which the Arabs responded with terrific rebellions. There were then forming mighty, fanatical, political sects, known by the name of "Chawarig," whose tendency was decidedly republican, and even the monarchical party of the Arabs considered their relation to the Chalifs as that of a solvable contract. The despotism of the Chalifate dates in reality only from the time, when the seat of the government was transferred to Bagdad by the Abbasides, who came to power principally by the aid of the Persians. The stock of the population of Bagdad consisted of Aryan Persians. Here the Chalifs surrounded themselves with Persian troops and Persian Ministers, as *e. g.* the Bermakides, who surrounded the throne for three long generations, and so there were many other Viziers of Persian extraction. The official body of the different Divans also consisted in great part of Persians. Nay, more, we find even, that individuals of Persian extraction who stood close by the side of the Chalifs, were animated by a bitter hatred against the Arabs, and gave unsparing vent to their ire in numerous writings and pamphlets, (missives). The turbulent and factious Arabian troops were distributed among their tribes, and dislocated in separate camps to the outside of the city. The Chalifs knew well that everything else but unity and harmony was possible among Semites. A confederation of these Arabian tribes against the despotic Chalifs was not to be feared. The Persian Shiites were, so to say, the legitimists of the Islam; they were the supporters and defen-

ders of the absolutistic idea of the Chalifate. At this tendency of the Chalifs, many Arabian tribes withdrew to the desert, and the Arabian sectarians, known as the Carmates, formed a terrible insurrection against the Chalifate, defeated its troops severely, and sustained themselves for a hundred and fifty years in continual war against this new un-Semitic form of government. But even during this time of despotic rule, the Chalifs still observed an outward appearance, at least, of freedom, in allowing the chiefs of the people to confirm the heir to the throne, whom they appointed. Autonomy existed among the Semites, and especially among the Arabs, in every form of government, even during the greatest despotic rule of the Chalifs.

At the same time as the Abbasides by the aid of the Aryan Persians, perfected despotism in Bagdad, while their Vizier, the first officer of the state was no more than a mean slave, the plaything of his master's whims, things were altogether different under the Omayades and among the Arabic population in Spain. Here old Arabic freedom yet held its sway, and the Arabian chieftains here, as well as the rich land owners with their numerous adherents and clients cared little or nothing about the Chalifs in Cordova, did not seek his favors, did not mind his commands and defied him on every occasion. The Vizier, too, was here not like that in the East, a favored slave for the moment, who trembled at the anger of his master, liable to be hurled from the highest pinnacle of his power into the most abject misery; here he was, as in our own time an English minister is, an independent, free man, who would brook no insult from his sovereign. A Chalif of Cordova, who once allowed himself a joke at the beard of his Vizier, was obliged to hear from him the following words: "Sire," said the angry minister, "one desires such a post as mine, in order to be protected against insults. Since, however, I see that I expose myself to it just by my position, receive, therefore my office back. I can well spare it, and my palace, which you can not take from me, is perfectly sufficient for me." With these words the proud minister left the confused sovereign, without a parting salutation. The sovereign tried his best to reconcile his offended minister, but did not succeed. Such a state of

things obtained there, where genuine Arabs lived, and there, too, the Chalifs courted the favor of public opinion and popularity, by means of personally attached friends and clients, by court poets and court literati ;— a sort of people similar to the venal French journalists of the now, thank God, buried Empire. — In the East the Chalifs had no need of resorting to such means, for there the Persian troops of Chorasan, or the Turks, took care by other and more energetic means, to preserve the authority of their sovereign.

e. The Semite with his sharply expressed individuality was on that account never absorbed by the state ; the idea of a state was, with him, rather the modern one, viz, that the state existed for the protection of the individual. With the Aryans, the idea was a different one; even in the republics of the old world, the individual counted for nothing, and the single person was more or less absorbed by the state. Even Plato and Aristotle agree on this point, that the individual must seek his highest happiness in the state, since he lives only for the state and is its servant. A state like the Spartan would have been an impossibility among Semites.

f. The Semites had no standing army, as a rule, but a citizens militia, which were kept together by some common interest or idea. The force of a standing army consists in the complete subjection of the individual soldier to the will of his superior ; but this the Semite does not do ; he obeys only then, when it is either to his advantage, or when he is compelled to do so. Voluntarily he only submits to one who is *intellectually* his superior. For this reason, Semites very seldom served as mercenaries, but rather employed such in their own service. In the comparatively rare instances, when Semites entered in foreign service, it was not the individual man as such, who hired himself out, but they went as a whole tribe, kept together under the lax discipline of its chief, and which, when occasion offered itself, could return home. During the first period of his reign, King David, acting then as a liberator, employed national troops only ; when subsequently, however, he extended his military enterprises and assumed the offensive, he was obliged to employ foreign, and evidently non-Semitic mercenaries. The same also was the case with the Maccabeans. In the first

times of the Chalifates, the troops consisted of Arabs only, and then every one of them who was able to carry a lance joined in the combats, but of course, every tribe together and under the leadership of their own chosen chieftain. To a certain extent, each individual fought for his own interest; the more cunning ones for rich spoils, the less so, for the dissemination of Islamism. In subsequent times, however, when great campaigns were carried on for the personal interests of the Chalifs, when the questions at issue were, whether Emir or Mamun should be the Chalif, then the war was carried on by Persians principally and later on by Turks. In the comparatively few instances, when Arabs fought for the sovereignity of one or another person, they either pursued in so doing their personal interest, *e. g.* that of a certain tribe, or they were carried away by a momentary partisan passion, and were soon cured of it. Thus it was in the civil war after the death of Chalif Othman, when Ali and Moaviya contended for the supremacy, and caused fearful bloodshed. The Arabs then soon came to their senses and saw that the personal ambition of two rivals was the cause of all that, and fanatics determined to kill both of them; others forced them to compromise; others again left the army on their own responsibility, declaring both of the rivals as unworthy to rule, and maintained that they were perfectly indifferent as to what family the candidate be from, and that even a slave might be chosen if personally worthy. Nay, more, some even maintained that there was no need at all of a chief for the state, and that a ruler may be deposed and even executed, if he be irreligious or rule unjustly.

g. This sharply pronounced individuality, this harsh self-will of the Semites, is also the cause of their many faults. They are wanting in unity, coherence, harmony and strict order. In vain did a Chalif of the first century of the Hegira, exhort to obedience and harmony; in vain did he preach to his Arabs, that separatism was the work of the devil; he preached to deaf ears. And indeed, how can one expect to find unity, harmony obedience and order in a race, every individual of which is unwilling to submit to the will of another, and is acting only according to his own mind? National coherency among the Semites was always of a loose kind; a single

tribe kept together to some extent, but that only as long as it was small, when it became numerous, it soon divided itself in two or more smaller ones, each one acting independently of the other.

h. For the same reason, the Semites rarely founded great states, and when they did so, it was not of long duration, the coherency of the individual members of the state being of a loose nature; each one of them being unwilling to be absorbed by the other, and rather maintaining its individual independency in the State. This is a natural result of the Semitic character; tough, resisting masses are not easily knit together, but where *one* will is dominant, there alone great undertakings and the founding of great states become possible. The Assyrians, the Babylonians, and later on the Chalifs founded great empires, yet in doing this, they did not destroy the independent life of the provinces; nay, more, in certain countries the national Kings were left on their thrones. No one ever thought of a centralized administration of the government, or of a suppression of the national life in the provinces. A different procedure, was that pursued by the Achaemenides, by Alexander of Macedon, by the Romans, and even by that of the Sassanides. Decentralization always prevailed among the Semites, while among the Aryans centralization prevails almost to this day. The Semites could never subject themselves to an infallible Pope, with reference to whom, ones own individuality must be completely given up in certain relations. But about one hundred millions of Aryans do this. — In the Vatican reside those who possess a vast knowledge of human nature, who know very well what they are doing. They know that the Aryans are in the main susceptible for such a dogma, and they are right in this, for the Persians may serve as an evidence of it, among whom mainly, although Mohammedan, there obtains the really un-Mohammedan doctrine of an *infallible* spiritual Head, called Imaum, to whom every one owes unconditional obedience. Among all the Aryans, the Germanic tribes are those most like the Semites in the definitely expressed idea of individuality; in consequence of this constitutional forms of government have more stability and substantiality among them than among the Romanic tribes. Autonomy and decentralization is

more developed among them, Protestantism and the freedom of religious investigations found an entrance among them mainly, and the doctrine of papal infallibility found its greatest opponents among German Catholics. There are other traits too, in which the Germans resemble the Semites, *e. g.* in religiousness, &c.

i. To the faults of the Semites, which are the results of their pronounced individualism belong also egotism, selfish over-estimation and polygamy. Further more, avarice, coupled very often with prodigal liberality, cunningness as an outflow of their sharp intellect and its tendency to subtleties. As an outflow too, of that Semitic constitution of mind is their acrid, biting and piquant satire, their pungent wit and cutting irony, by which Arabian and Jewish poets of the middle ages, as well as Jewish writers of modern times have distinguished themselves.

2. The influence of this sharply pronounced individualism upon science and poetry.

a. This quality gave the Semites the ability of individualizing abstract objects, *i. e.* imparting to them concrete, one might almost say, a material form. The Semites, it is true, were not the inventors of the Alphabet, in the proper sense of that word, but they were certainly those, who made the right use of an obscure idea of the Egyptians, elaborated and disseminated it far and wide. It was also the Semites, who invented the means of weighing objects, and of measuring time and space, *i. e.* they are the inventors of weights and measures. And is this invention really a small affair, because we are familiar with the conception of it from our childhood? But those who first came upon the thought of measuring such incomprehensible things as time and space, they certainly made a grand invention. These inventors were the Semitic Babylonians, from whom we date to this day, the division upon our time pieces. But this invention is rooted in the peculiar facility of the Semites of individualizing abstract things.

b. The poetry of the Semites is more subjective than objective; when a Semite describes a natural phenomenon, for instance a sun-rise or the like, he tells more of what he *feels*, than of that which he sees. The easy excitibility of the Semites makes their poetry powerful, deep and heartfelt. The lament of the Semite is not silent and re-

flective, but like most of his actions, it is clamorous, one might almost call it, heaven-storming. The Semites, as we noticed before, have hardly written any epics at all, and never any drama. The opinion that the Song of Solomon is a drama, I consider as without foundation * An individual of a sharply pronounced character, may well be able to depict his own feelings and affections, bnt not those of another one, for to do so, he must forsake, to a certain extent, his own individuality, and place himself in that of the other, and this is a thing, which a Semite is not well able to do, and yet for the creation of an Epos or a drama, it is indispensible that one should be able to do so. The Jews are, therefore, to this day, poor dramatists, with few exceptions. The great lyric writer, Heinrich Heine, was a poor dramatist, and the only drama which Berthold Auerbach wrote, has no great merits as such.

3. Influence of this quality of the Semites in religious matters.

a. The Semitic idea of Deity, expressed itself in adoration of the stars, of certain spirits, (called *gin*) ; and in that of an extra mundane, personal God. God and the world are among the Semites, two totally different and sharply separated conceptions. The divinities of the Semites are not indistinct forms, but sharply expressed personalities, as the Semites themselves are. The idea of Deity among the Aryans, expresses itself on the contrary, in Pantheism and Polytheism, which latter is nothing else than a deification of the abstract forces of nature. This needs no demonstration here ; but we must call attention to one point, *viz.*, that a nation will rather modify its religion to make it accord with the national character and its native constitution of mind, than it will do the reverse. The Mohammedans, and hence Monotheistic Aryans, inclined as much to Pantheism as their heathen kinsmen, and founded Pantheistic sects inside of Islamism. We call to mind here the Persian Pantheists,

* True to my Semitic origin, I dare to differ from my great brother, the Author, in this one instance. In my own new translation of and commentary upon the Song of Solomon, (which is yet in manuscript) I have shown conclusively this poem to be a true, although a *sui generis* drama.

THE TRANSLATOR.

Halloy, Sohrawerdi, Gelal-ed-Din-er-Rumi, and the other numberless Persian Sufis, whose Pantheistic doctrines found entrance chiefly among the Persians, and found there zealous followers and even martys for their cause.

b. In close connection with the Semitic conception of God, are their theories of the Creation. Monotheistic as well as polytheistic Semites conceive the Creation to be the free act of a personal Deity, and the world, which is completely separated from the Deity, they conceive as the object of the divine Creation. Among the Aryans, however — among whom the ancient Persians form a partial exception — Cosmogony and Theogony flow into each other; the Creation is conceived of as a self production and self developement of the world, with which theogonic elements are more or less combined, and which ends at last in Pantheism and Emanation. Among the Semites the Creation is a *κτίσις, creatura* among the Aryans it is a *φύσις, natura,* or *genitura.*

c. Among the Semites there prevailed also a fixed boundary between God and man; for both of them are sharply pronounced individualities, which cannot be comingled. Here worship and divine adoration of men, are as a general thing, of very rare occurence among the Semites. Among the Aryans it is just the reverse of this; for with them, the way from the lowest man up to the highest Divinity, was made up of a series of ascending steps, so that man and God are perfectly confluent: hence the divine homage paid to men, whereby it may happen, that he, who was yesterday a fellow-huntsman and a fellow-drinker, tomorrow is adored by his fellows as a God. The doctrine of the Incarnation, which is most intimately connected with the divine adoration of men, was and is widely disseminated among the Aryans. The same phenomenon occurs — remarkably enough— among the *Mohammedan Persians* too. Among these, the doctrine, that God embodied himself in a human being, became widely diffused; various sects were formed whose doctrines are briefly expressed in the words, TAUCHID, *i. e.* the becoming of one with God, then HOLUL, *i. e.* the indwelling of God in the world and in men, and lastly TASCHABBOH, *i. e.* the becoming similar and the identification of men with God. Ali is adored by them, in a measure, as God, or as an incarnation of God. Sim-

ilar to this it is related of the Persian sect of *Rawandiyyah* in Chorosan, that they deified, in measure, the Chalif el-Manssur — who is well known by the not very honorable surname of el-Safah, *i. e.* the shedder of blood. They called him their "Rehb," *i. e.* their Lord — a name applied to God only, by other Mohammedans, — who nourishes and strengthens them. The castle, which this Chalif erected and which is named after him, they call "the castle of our Lord." Some other Persian Mohammedan sects, have a sort of a mystical divine Penta, consisting of Mohammed, Ali, Fatima, and her two sons Hasan and Hosein. The doctrine of the Imamat consists in the belief, that the saints, to whom they pay divine homage, called Imams, are constant divine self-revelations in human forms, and that the soul of every Imam, goes over at death into the body of his successor. Similar doctrines are met with among the Buddhists. Aryans, therefore, coincide in their religious doctrines and conceptions of Deity, although some of them are Polytheists, others of them are Pantheists and others again are Monotheists.

d. The Prophet and the prophetic institution are phenomena of almost exclusively Semitic occurrence. There were, indeed, holy men and inspired seers among the Aryans too, but, with the exception of Zoroaster, who certainly was not free from Semitic influences, the Aryan seers were altogether different from the Semitic prophets. The Aryan seer was a man, who brought himself into a state of exaltation by means of external or internal excitations, and as it were engulfed himself in the Deity, or held intercourse with him in visions. The Semitic prophet, on the other hand, was a sharply expressed human individual, who stood over against a similarly sharply expressed divine individual, with whom, as it was believed, he held direct intercourse, negotiated, and even at times called the Deity to account. The Semitic conception of the relation of their God to the prophet, was that of a king to his favored servant. The Semitic prophet was always a human being, who sought to obtain the good will and love of his God; the Aryan saint, on the contrary, was often regarded, even by the Mohammedan Persians as a divine incarnation; and whether he was Heathen or Mohammedan Aryan, his

desire was to be united to and lost in the Deity. The former of these, the Mohammedan Persians call *Tauchid, i. e.*, "Union," and the latter *Fana, i. e.*, "the vanishing," by which is meant the vanishing of ones own personality, and its absorption in the Deity.

e. The God of the Semites is, as was said before, as sharply an expressed individuality as is the Semite himself. One consequence of this is, that the doctrine of Fate, to which the gods too are subject, was not developed among the Semites; for the Semitic God moves freely and does whatever he pleases. So too has the doctrine of human free will found most acceptance among the Semites. In Mosaism the doctrine is strongly insisted upon, that man is a perfect master of his creations, for which too he is fully responsible. In Islamism the Arabs began to busy themselves very early about predestination and free will. Among the Mohammedans the Mutoselites were the chief defenders of the free will doctrine, and orthodox Islamism modified this doctrine a little, but did not deny it. Among the Mohammedan Persians, on the contrary, even among those of them, who otherwise were inclined to the doctrines of the Mutaselites, the doctrine of the freedom of the will found little favor, but that of fatalism found most acceptance with them and with the Turks. The individualism of the Semite expressed itself, therefore, as much in his political as in his religious life.

f. From the time that the doctrine of immortality became extant among the Semites, the belief in the continuous existence of the individual after death prevailed among them. Among the Aryans, on the other hand, this doctrine was either conceived of in a grossly material way, as was the case, *e. g.*, with the Greeks and Romans, or as the Heathen and Mohammedan Aryans thought of and desired after immortality, namely, the vanishing of the individual in the All, as the absorption of the drop in the ocean. This most highly desired aim the Buddhists called Nirwana, and the Mohammedan Persians called it Fana, the vanishing. The Aryan, who permitted himself to be absorbed of the civil state, desired also to be absorbed by and vanish in the All; the Semite, on the other hand, who did not allow himself to be absorbed by the state, but claimed it rather for his

own benefit, he found no pleasure in being absorbed by and vanishing in the All.

g. Still less pleasure did the genuine Semite,—whose blood was not mixed with Aryan blood, as was the case with the later Syrians,—find in Asceticism and Monasticism. To the first they found, on the whole, no inclination, although it did occur among them here and there; but the last they utterly abominated. Self-denial in any way, and especially the denying oneself the pleasures of family life, this did not belong to the Semites. "Thou wilt eat and be satisfied, and thou wilt praise God," is said in the Pentateuch; to *fast* and praise God was not required. "Thy wife like a fruitful vine, thy sons like the branches of the olive tree around thy table," to "dwell in peace under his vine and fig tree," this was the wish of the Semite. To have many children, and if possible many wives, too, these the Semite counted among the joys of life. To remain unmarried is something inconceivable, almost an unheard-of thing for the Semite generally, and more especially for the Arab. The same was the case with the Jews until the latest times, and even now, too, the statistics of western countries show a comparatively greater number of marriages among Jews than among Christians. The Semitic Mohammedan knows nothing of Monasticism, so that the Arabs say, there is no Monasticism in Islam. There were, indeed, "Zuhada" among the Arabs, a sort of people who led a secluded life, but they were comparatively few only, and as a general thing, these few too began it in their mature age, after having already enjoyed the pleasures of life, and often in excess. It is a very remarkable fact that suicide is a very rare occurrence among the Arabs, who otherwise are noted for their bravery; sober-mindedness and a dislike against every kind of self-denial, protect them from such an extravagance. Among the different Aryan nations, however, although acknowledging four radically different religions, we find a strong inclination to Asceticism as well as to Monasticism. There are ascetics and monks among Christians as well as among Persian Mohammedans, as among Brahmins and Buddhists, too.

h. This sharply expressed Individualism of the Semites, which does not easily subject itself to definite order

and authority, and which permits no imposition of spiritual fetters upon itself, this Individualism may also be the cause why in the Semitic religions of Judaism and Islamism, there are no well defined and established dogmas, from which there should not be permitted a hair-breadth's deviation, as the case is with the Aryans. There are indeed certain fundamental doctrines in those two religions, from which dogmas no departure is allowed, *e. g.*, the Divine Unity, revelation, providence, rewards and punishment, but of these a general acknowledgement only is required; but how these are to be conceived of, about this there was much, indeed, written and disputed, yet they were never defined precisely, and rather left, more or less, to the individual mind. When Persian (Aryan) influence became very powerful at the court of the Chalifs of Bagdad, there were attempts made now and then to define more precisely certain of these fundamental doctrines, but these attempts always met with strong resistance, and the definitions of one day were rejected the next. It is, therefore, a remarkable phenomenon, that while we find thousands of books among Jews and Mohammedans, which teach about religious observances, there are relatively few works which treat about religious dogmas, while the very opposite of this is the case with the Aryans.

III. As a third main quality of the Semites, we designated: Depth and inwardness of the affections (*Gemuth*), quick and easy excitibility of the same, and consequently, receptivity for humane ideas, inclination to benevolence, quick enthusiasm for an idea, exaltation of the mind, of an idea above material power, a more spiritual conception of the external world, and an inclination to *Idealism*. These qualities of the Semites manifest themselves in the following phenomena in which they sharply contrast with the Aryans.

1. The Semites, and signally so the Hebrews, are the originators of new religious conceptions and views, which were almost unknown even to the most cultivated of the heathen Aryans. The religions of the heathen are based on the idea, that the Deity is very powerful, and is able to spread good and evil; it is, therefore, necessary to be on a good footing with it, to attain which, various, and for the most part grossly sensuous means,

were resorted to. Religion had the character of a compromise between the weak, help-needing individual and the strong help-spreading Deity. Religion as a concern of the heart, religious inwardness, love and resignation to God, the idea that God is all-kind and all-merciful, all these are, on the other hand, the products of the susceptible and feeling Semites, and especially of the ancient Hebrews, to whom humanity can never be sufficiently thankful. Religious hymns like the Psalms, no nation and no single literature of the world can show, and they could only originate among a people, which occupied the first place, even among the deeply feeling Semitic race. The religious hymns of the Greeks and ancient Hindoos, stand in relation to those of the Hebrews, as the wild flowers stand to odoriferous roses and lilies.

2. With the idea of Deity, even the most cultured nations of antiquity, combined only the idea of power, at times also the idea of Justice, but never the idea of morality. But it was a Semitic nation, and this again the ancient Hebrew nation, which taught humanity to conceive of God as a principle of morality, as the very ideal of holiness and purity. It is from this people too, that the doctrines of morality proceeded, and for these we search not in the, otherwise so highly praised, works of classical antiquity, but we look for these in the Bible.

3. So likewise the humane doctrines of exercising kindness and mercy towards the poor, the oppressed, and the helpless; of treating the slave, nay even the least with kindness, these blessed doctrines proceeded chiefly from a Semitic nation, and—I dare say it, although anticipating decided contradiction—until this day, these are practiced more by Semites than Aryans. We do not wish to say by this that those doctrines were totally unknown to the cultivated nations of antiquity; but they were not of such high import with them, they had not become part of their flesh and blood, as is the case with those modern nations, who profess those religions, which were founded by the Semites. Searching in the classical writings of antiquity in the pre-Christian period, where do we find the precepts of Love to our fellow-man; *i. e.* helping the poor, the suffering, treating kindly the slave, nay even the beast with mercy? In the laws of Manu, we meet, indeed, here and there, with

similar precepts, but along with these we meet with the most cruel precepts against the Parias and the mixed castes. That even the foreign slave was not allowed to be mutilated, that the killing of him was to be punished with death, that even the beast should be allowed a day of rest, these the Pentateuch prescribes. The Mosaic precepts of not yoking together the ox and the ass, whose powers are unequal, of not muzzling the ox while threshing, these are precepts which go far beyond the endeavors of even our societies for preventing cruelty to animals. Have we, although we are Christians, any precepts like that of Moses, forbiding the distraint of the artisan's tools, which he needs for his maintainance, or a precept commanding the returning at night of the bedding which was taken for debt during the day? *

Even in the Rabbinical literature of the middle ages, there are thousands of precepts inculcating brotherly love, kindness, and mercy to the slave, and even towards the beast. There are in the Koran a number of places, where the giving of alms is spoken of as the holiest duty of man. And how do the Semites practice these precepts? We answer, more zealously than the Aryans, although these are the disciples of the former. There is not a Jewish congregation in which one or more benevolent institutions are not to be found. The benevolence of the Jews, of Western Jews, is almost proverbial, so that unprejudiced Christians point to it with shame at their own delinquency. The chase is an abomination to the Jew who can not understand how a person can have the heart to shoot down a poor bird, who perhaps just went out to find food for its young ones, and that for the mere pleasure of a few moments. Angling, too, the Jew is not fond of, his heart aching at the sight of the animal's writhing on the sharp hook in its mouth. The giving of alms, plays a great part among Mohammedans too, and rich Moslems are zealous in building hospitals, erecting caravanseries for travelers, and digging wells by the road side.

It will be objected here, that these doctrines did not proceed from *all* the Semites, but first and last from the

* Some but not all States of this Union, have made a law of these precepts.—Tr.

Hebrew nation only. To this we answer, that however talented a nation may be, it will distinguish itself in that thing only, the germ of which is to be found in the entire race to which that nation belongs. The most gifted Semitic nation will never accomplish in art and science that which the Aryan Greeks did; but these on the other hand, were totally incapable of accomplishing that, which the Hebrew nation did in the points mentioned above. No nation can overstep the moral and intellectual bounderies set for its race. The germ of the moral and intellectual talents of the Hebrews is to be found also among other Semitic nations, as the germ of Grecian talents is to be found among other Aryans, too. And the shady side too of this moral disposition of the Semites is manifested in the blemishes of their character. Among these blemishes must be mentioned a sharply expressed passion for the female sex, which passion, however, the better part of humanity would not put on the shady side. We do not mean, however, to say by this, that the Aryans are ignorant of this passion, but only the Arab is a real virtuoso in love affairs, so that a mere hearsay about a beautiful woman in some nomadic tribe is sufficient to kindle him into a flame and rob him of all his rest and comfort. But the hate and the vengeance too of the Semite is as mighty and strong as is his love, and this is perfectly natural. The avenging of blood is a genuine Semitic feeling, and although this is not altogether unknown to other races too, still among the Arabs it is in a measure legally systematized, and there are some tribes among them among whom the laws of blood avenging are traditionally propogated. When an Arab meets another stranger Arab on his journey, they usually do not mention their names and descent to one another, lest they should find out that one of their ancestors killed the other one's, and so the avenging of blood would have to be exercised. Mosaism sought to limit this avenging of blood as much as possible, but apparently without success for a long time. The Semite is very sensitive, irritable, violent and bitter in polemics.

4. Heroes and heroism, war and carnage are the subject matter of the heroic sagas and epic poems of the Aryans. This tendency is to be found in Homer as well as in the Hindoo epos, in the Nibelungen and in the

Schahnameh, in the Northern and in the Slavic epos. But the celebrated hero of Semitic saga is a wise man, a prophet, a saint, and the theme of it is, wisdom and piety. King Solomon hardly waged any war, and still he is after David, the most celebrated King of the nation of Israel, and that because of his wisdom. National tradition relates, that God once appeared to him in a dream, and said unto him: "Ask what should I give thee." And the King desired neither length of days, nor riches, nor victory over his foes, but said: "Give, therefore, unto thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, and that I might discern between good and evil." The fame of this unwarlike but wise King spread to the uttermost confines of the Semitic countries, and from the far distance there came a Semitic queen to admire his wisdom and try him with riddles. The Semitic King prepared no chase and no military parade for his royal guest, as an Aryan King would do, but the entertainment consisted in a sort of an intellectual tournament. With the King of Tyre too, Solomon kept up according to Flavius Josephus, a learned correspondence, in which they proposed to each other difficult problems. The great heroes of Islam, such as Chalid, Jaad ben Wakkas, Okba, &c., who in the space of a few years established an empire as great as the Romans did after centuries, only the names of these heroes are almost forgotten by the Mohammedans, but every good Mohammedan knows well the names of those who have transmitted the traditional religious doctrines called Ahlu 'l 'Hadis. The Ashab, *i. e.* the companions of Mohammed, their successors, and the successors of these successors all of whom propagated to real or pretended doctrines of Mohammed, these are known to all. Almost every one knows the great teacher of the traditions *Hasan-el-Basri*, but hardly any one knows who *Chalid* was. Characteristical of this tendency of the Arabs is the vast number of biographical works in their literature. These works relate principally to such men who were active as savans or poets. Every large city and every province possessed a biographical collection of its notable men. But a learned Arab of Spain, Ibn-Hazm, in the 12th century already expressed his astonishment, that the inhabitants of Chorasan, Taboristan, Gorgan, Kerman, Rei, &c., who were

mostly Aryans ; possessed no biographical works about their learned men. It seems, therefore, that these were less respected, and less attention was paid them, than was the case in those lands which were principally inhabited by Semites.

5. The founders of Aryan dynasties were mighty heroes, successful generals who distinguished themselves by bravery and strategic talents. Even in our own century we see a man founding a dynasty, whose chief merit consisted in his being the greatest general of his time. A highly cultivated nation was so blinded by the brilliancy of his military powers, that to its own misfortune it made as his successor a relative who only shared in his name and in his bad qualities. It was different from this among the Semites. The founders of their dynasties were as a rule wise and holy men, or offsprings of such, or generally speaking they were defenders of some real or pretended new idea. The claims of the Alides, Omogaded and Abbosides to the Chalifate were based on their near or remote consanguinity to the Prophet, and on the services which their ancestors rendered in the dissemination and support of Islam. In the tenth century the Alides succeeded in founding a great empire on the mere pretence of being Alides, and thus descendants of the prophet Mohammed. The founder of the Almoravit dynasty in North Africa and subsequently in Spain was a missionary who preached Islamism to the Berbers. The founder of the Almohade dynasty in Spain, was a saint who preached a new doctrine concerning the unity of God, from which too the dynasty is said to have derived its name. The mighty princes of the Karmates came forward as reformers of Islam, and in this way attained to dominion and power. The same thing took place almost in our own time with the Wahabites, of whom we have recently received such interesting information through the English traveler Palgrave. The founder of this mighty empire in central Arabia, took up the sword as the disciple of a reformer of Islam, whose doctrines he wished to promulgate, and so he attained to dominion. His descendants too to this day profess to be the defenders of a purified Islam.

When the Chalifate fell to pieces, and a number of small states were formed on its ruins, then most of the

founders of the new dynasties in the eastern provinces, which were inhabited by Aryans, were either proficient military leaders, or former governors of states; but in the western provinces, which were inhabited by Arabs, the founders of new dynasties were principally pious, holy men, and those who defended some new doctrine.

The union of priesthood and royalty in one person is something peculiarly Semitic, but the priest could necessarily represent a spiritual power, and only through this could he exercise his material power.

6. The most excellent attribute of an ideal king among the Aryans is bravery; among the Semites, on the other hand, it is wisdom, justice, and piety. King David was and is admired by the Jews, not because he was a hero and freed Israel from its enemies, but because of his piety, because of his being a holy poet, and the poetic author of the Psalms. Nay, his heroship was accounted to him as a fault, for when he wished to build a temple, the prophet told him, in the name of God: "Thou hast shed much blood, and carried on wars, thou oughtest not, therefore, to build a house dedicated to my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth before my face." In the books of Kings it is mostly recorded what the kings of Israel did that was pleasing or not pleasing in the sight of God, while their military undertakings are either not mentioned at all, or very briefly, and merely in passing. The Maccabeans, too, were revered, not that they fought like heroes, but because of the *idea* for which they fought. So Ali is revered by the Arabs chiefly on account of his great piety and reputed wisdom. The Arabians are much like the Biblical historians. They too speak of the wars of the Chalifs in so far chiefly as these were waged for the defense or dissemination of Islam; otherwise they record of the Chalifs, that they observed strictly the religious rites, that they offered regularly the canonic prayers, made so and so many pilgrimages to Mecca, gave much alms, established schools and hospitals, exercised justice, patronized learned men and poets, and made them many rich presents; of one and another, too, it is related that he was himself a *Shair*, *Fasih*, and *Balig*, *i. e.*, a poet, eloquent, and an orator, etc. We have already intimated above that the Chalif was regarded chiefly as a spiritual

head man, who actually performed religious functions, *e. g.*, speaking the Friday prayer from the pulpit of the principal Mosque. The same did his representatives, the governors of the provinces, in his name.

7. With this moral tendency of the Semites, it was to be expected that they did not carry on war from love of adventure, bellicoseness, love of fame, or for the sake of redeeming a so-called military fame. And such was really the case; for their wars had either a practical aim, *i. e.*, to defend themselves against the enemy, to shake off his yoke, or to obtain spoils; or they had an ideal aim, fighting for the defense and dissemination of a certain idea. War *per se*, was never the object of the Semites. This is, also, not the case with the Aryans, who had and who have, in a measure, even to this day, a desire for and a pleasure in war, which is often for them not simply a means but an object of itself.

8. In a race which knew so well the value of its moral riches, it would be natural to find in it martyrs for an idea, more frequently than in other races. How grandly prominent are such men as the prophets Elijah, Jeremiah, and some others, who devoted their whole life to a high moral idea, enduring sufferings, persecutions, want, and misery for it, and in spite of these, proclaiming that idea fearlessly and boldly before the mighty ones of the earth! In the times of the first Maccabeans, the Jews were the first and only people of the ancient world, who were ready to die in masses for an abstract idea. The Greeks had absolutely no conception of such a phenomenon, and none of them who spoke about the Jews, failed to notice this remarkable fact, that this strange little nation was sooner ready to die than violate the Sabbath. When, later on, the half crazy Caius Caligula commanded his image to be erected everywhere and worshiped, the world obeyed; but the Jews refused to obey the behest of the emperor, and thus they went with full consciousness into inevitable destruction. When the Jewish delegates came to Rome to pray for the mercy of revoking that edict, they were the objects of derision in the sight of the court people, who could not at all conceive how an entire nation were willing to die for a metaphysical idea. What the Jews have suffered for their religion down to modern times

how many thousands of them suffered death at the stake, this is well known to all. The Arabs too have had many fanatical and enthusiastic martyrs of their faith. Among the Aryans, martyrdom for an idea began chiefly with the introduction of Christianity, preached to them by Semites. In the ancient world there were martyrs for the good of the State, because in other respects too, the individual was absorbed by it, while martyrdom for an abstract idea was a thing of extremely rare occurrence.

9. The subject of schools played almost always among the Semites, and plays even to a certain extent now, a by far higher and more important part, than among the Aryans. To instruct or cause to instruct children, to disseminate, doctrine and knowledge, and especially to establish elementary schools, is regarded in Judaism as well as in Islam, as a religious duty, as an act well pleasing in the sight of God. To receive money for instructing was regarded not only as unseemly, but as sinful. The teacher was paid only for his loss of time during which he could earn nothing. Compulsory general attendence in school was introduced among the Jews during the time of Christ, but two hundred years before that time too, there were elementary schools everywhere and as it would seem, maintained at public cost. A city says the Talmud, which has no elementary schools in it is to be excommunicated or even destroyed. It is through elementary schools, it is further said there, that the world is preserved. Certainly a great truth. The voice in Daniel: "And they that make others wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever;" this the rabbis apply to elementary teachers, who teach, of course, gratuitously, or nearly so. A precept of the rabbis is to honor one's teacher, from whom one had received the essential parts of his knowledge, more even than his father, for, say they, this one gave you your physical life only, but the other the spiritual life. To this day there is actually not a single Jew, who does not instruct his boys; and the congregation provides instruction for the poor and the orphan. Similar to this are the views of Islam, also of Semitic origin. At a time when the highest personages of Europe could nei-

ther read nor write, there was the greatest zeal manifested among Arabian princes and private persons in establishing elementary schools, and Medresen—a sort of middle or high school—as well as public libraries. At the time of the Chalifs in Spain, there were many private and public libraries whose catalogues filled many volumes. The learned man was always held in higher esteem among the Semites than among the Aryans. The courts of the Chalifs of Bagdad and Cordova, as well as those of minor princes, were the gathering places of learned theologians, grammarians, historians, poets, and literary men of all sorts. The potentates manifested the greatest zeal in attracting to themselves men of learned and poetic renown, and endeavored to captivate them by extravagant princely gifts. The salons of the Arabian princes and magnates of the empire, during the flow of Arabian culture, resembled very much the salons of the French at the time of Voltaire, D'Alembert, Diderot, etc. Nay, some Arabian princes themselves sought the honor of literary fame.

10. A beautiful word spoken at the proper time, rejoices the Semitic heart, and many a death warrant has such a word caused to be revoked. Arabian historians have many an example like this to relate. A beautiful passage can throw the Semite still more in an intoxication of enthusiasm, nay, even overpower him and make him feel beside himself. When a new poet arises in an Arabian tribe, it is even to this day congratulated by deputations from other tribes on that auspicious event.

11. It is a very remarkable phenomenon, that an imageless adoration of the Deity proceeded from and maintained itself almost exclusively among the Semites. It is well known what terrible conflicts took place between image destroyers and image worshipers, but the first succumbed. The Semites too were originally worshipers of images, and among them too, in Palestine namely, there was a century of conflicts between the destroyers and the worshipers of images, but in this case the latter succumbed. Is here not a manifestation of a greater ability, or if you choose, of a greater inclination on the part of the Semites, to conceive the external world spiritually, than on the part of the Aryans?

12. The idealism of a nation manifests itself best,

in its desires and hopes. When, therefore, we read the writings of the Israelites, a phenomenon becomes salient, which is unique in its kind. What did this people desire, and for what did it hope? It desired and hoped for the time to come in the which all the nations of the earth should seek the *truth* and find it; a time in the which all nations should reforge their swords and spears into sickles and pruning hooks, that no nation should lift the sword against another, when men should not exercise in the practice of war, when universal peace should prevail, and knowledge and insight should fill the whole earth. What did and what do the Aryan nations yet think, who have become acquainted with the Bible for the last thousand and five hundred years of this idealism? Only in these last years, when the fury of war had soaked the fields of Europe over richly with human blood, only now some comparatively few noble men lifted up their voices and preached that which Isaiah proclaimed already two thousand years ago. But as long as there are men to whom war is a diversion, and who even find pleasure in it, so long is there no salvation for humanity.

I have here, although myself a Semite, not ignored the faults of the Semites, but pointed out also their good qualities. But in spite of this bright side of the Semitic character, yet was the culture of the Semite a one sided one, for reasons which we mentioned; and our civilization too would have been a one-sided one if the Semites alone were our teachers and leaders. Happily, our culture consists of a union of the products of both Semitic and Aryan culture; for our modern culture dates principally from the 16th century, when the Bible and classical literature were, so to say, discovered anew in western Europe. From the ancient Israelites, who in a spiritual respect occupy the highest rank among the Semites, we have received, through the intervention of Christianity, our daily bread, *i. e., pure conceptions of God, and the doctrines of humanity and morality*: from the Greeks, on the other hand, who occupied equally the highest rank among the Aryans, we have received all that belongs to the improvement and beautifying of human life, *i. e., art*, in the widest sense of the

word, and *science*. We have already almost reached the intellectual height of the Greeks; nay, in many respects, we have even overreached it; the above described idealism of the ancient Israelitic nation, let us hope that our grand-children's children will reach. May those whom God has entrusted with the holy duty of protecting us, care for our protection and safety in accordance with existing circumstances; but we learned men, whom God has granted the mercy of being able to devote our entire lives to the searching out of the Truth and the dissemination of a higher culture, we men of peace and science, we must so labor in work and in writing, that that idealism should be realized when man shall make a sickle out of his sword; that universal peace should reign, and that the whole of humanity should be filled with knowledge and understanding.